

# California State Journal of Medicine.

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AUGUST, 1903.

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

At the special request of the JOURNAL, Mr. W. C. Tait, the attorney for the State Board of Medical Examiners, has given, in this issue, a synopsis of the *status MEDICAL LAW. praesens* because of the latest attack made on the Board in the courts. The JOURNAL has considered this timely, for the subject is of interest to every medical practitioner, is not likely to be fully presented in the lay press, and may be presented with bias in some publications. The presentation of the matter is in no way an attempt at a trial of the case, for that will occur in the courts; but it is a very clear statement of what has been done and is doing in these matters and is offered for general reading and consideration. Mr. Tait points out that all attacks on the Board of Examiners by illegal practitioners have ceased. They had their innings some time ago and never won a case. The present attack is from men holding a license or those who have failed to secure one by passing the required examination. It is a remarkable thing that any man could wish to wipe out the mark that distinguishes him from the illegal practitioner, or could wish to enter a company where these black sheep could also claim a place. The profession has to think of this. The present attack is on the legality of each practitioner's license—each individual man being attacked. Does the profession want that? There is another point that is brought out, namely, the greater value of a license in a court of law than a diploma. The average juryman can easily understand what a license is. The trades unions may have taught it to him, and, if so, they have taught the lesson exceedingly well; but this same juryman does not care particularly for the diploma. The physician may, on the other hand, be particularly proud of his diploma; it may have come from an institution which makes its diplomas mean something, and it may represent, to

its owner, a goal attained after very hard work. This, of course, is quite right and as it should be; but it is equally right that the license should have its value in its own place. In scholastic circles let us think of our diplomas; in legal strife let us stand by our licenses, and let us see to it that those who attack the law that gives us our professional licensure shall be thought of as would be those who attacked our personal characters. The JOURNAL asks the perusal of Mr. Tait's paper. It is confident that it will clarify the ideas of many who, from lack of incentive to think of the matter, have not kept always before them the fact that it is the license on which their legal standing rests, and that if this is overthrown we become at once legally illegal. Who wants that stigma?

The report of the committee on new remedies of the New York State Pharmaceutical Association, recently published, is a document of absorbing interest. In reading the report it is difficult to determine whether any members of the committee are

## ADDITIONS TO MATERIA MEDICA.

gifted with a sense of humor, but we certainly hope that such is the case. They are sufficiently cautious, in any event, for the phrases "stated to represent," "said to contain," "said to be more effective than—," "claimed to be more effective than—," "said to be non-toxic," etc., are found in a great majority of the short statements relative to these new "materia medica preparations." The committee seems to have included only those which it deems of some consequence, yet the list enumerates 115 articles. How many more new "materia medica preparations," not worthy the consideration of the committee may have been placed on the market during the year, for the annoyance of the physician and to load up the pharmacist, it would be difficult to determine. We know of a considerable number that are not to be found in this list. Of the 115, thirty-seven are either simply new names for old things, or are launched and "recommended" as substitutes for something else; many of these are merely trade names for well-known chemicals or pharmaceuticals. Fifteen of the 115 are "recommended" for use as uric acid solvents, or for the general treatment of genito-urinary troubles; and practically all of these are merely mixtures of previously known remedies. Thirteen are stated to be useful in the treatment of throat or lung troubles, or are of the guaiacol family of preparations. Of these, in general, the committee says: "While most of these compounds are free from the objectionable characteristics of guaiacol itself, it is, nevertheless, the fact that most of them are at the same time much inferior to the parent product in medicinal value."